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Economic and Social Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/1995/L.50
25 July 1995

Original: ENGLISH

Substantive session of 1995
Geneva, 26 June-28 July 1995
Agenda item 6 (n)

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND RELATED QUESTIONS: INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-President of the Council, Mr. Jean-Marie Kacou Gervais (Côte d'Ivoire) on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution E/1995/L.33

International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction

The Economic and Social Council

1. Recognizes that disaster reduction forms an integral part of sustainable development strategies and national development plans of vulnerable countries and communities;

2. Recognizes also that concerted international action is required to promote and apply disaster reduction effectively and that it must be supported by effective coordination of the day-to-day activities for which the secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction is responsible;

3. Commends the work of the International Framework of Action for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, in particular its contribution to the implementation of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and the Plan of Action contained therein; 1/

4. Notes with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 49/22 A of 2 December 1994; 2/

5. Takes note in particular of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General concerning the development of a coordinated international programme for disaster reduction, including the strengthening of the International Framework of Action for the Decade and the closing event of the Decade;

6. Urges again all United Nations bodies that are involved in disaster reduction activities to give priority to integrating, coordinating and strengthening their work to build the capacities of disaster-prone countries and regions in the field of disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness, with particular consideration for the needs of the least developed countries and small island and land-locked developing States;

7. Expresses its concern about the continuing financial limitations with regard to effective support for the International Framework of Action for the Decade and in relation to the national, subregional, regional and international activities for the implementation of the Yokohama Strategy and its Plan of Action, as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/22 A;

8. Calls upon Member States, relevant intergovernmental bodies and all others involved in the Decade to provide adequate financial resources and technical support for the activities of the Decade;

9. Requests the Secretary-General, therefore, to include in his report to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session an examination of options from all existing sources for an adequate funding of core functions of the secretariat of the Decade, and to specify those functions in his report;

1/ A/CONF.172/9, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

2/ A/50/201-E/1995/74.

10. Recommends that the General Assembly, at its fiftieth session, consider the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction as a separate sub-item under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development";

11. Recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 44/236 of 22 December 1989, 48/188 of 21 December 1993, 49/22 A of 2 December 1994 and 49/22 B of 20 December 1994,

"Expressing its solidarity with the people and countries that suffer as a result of natural disasters,

"Emphasizing once again the urgent need for concrete measures to reduce the vulnerability of societies to natural hazards, the loss of human lives and the heavy physical and economic damage that occur as a result of natural disasters, in particular in developing countries, small island States and land-locked countries,

"Reiterating the validity of the conclusions of the first World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, held at Yokohama, in 1994 in particular with regard to its call for increased bilateral, subregional, regional and multilateral cooperation in the field of disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation,

"Commending those countries, national and local institutions, organizations and associations that have adopted policies, allocated resources and initiated action programmes, including international assistance, for disaster reduction and, in this context, welcoming the participation of private companies and individuals,

"Commending all countries, intergovernmental organizations and regional organizations that have actively engaged in regional and subregional assessments of vulnerability to natural hazards and have consequently initiated regional and subregional cooperation in the field of disaster reduction, including the exchange of data and technology as well as the development of joint administrative, technological and scientific approaches for applied disaster reduction,

"Commending those organizations of the United Nations system, other international organizations, scientific associations and non-governmental organizations, which, in accordance with decisions of their governing bodies, have incorporated the recommendations of the General Assembly relating to disaster reduction and those of the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction in their programmes of work, thus contributing towards effective progress in disaster reduction in their mandated responsibilities and respective fields of activity, including the allocation of budgetary resources for disaster reduction,

"1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General concerning the specific measures for the implementation of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and the Plan of Action contained therein 1/ and requests the secretariat of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction to continue to promote and monitor their translation into concrete activities, in close cooperation with all concerned bodies of the International Framework of Action for the Decade in order to ensure timely and effective implementation;

"2. Commends those developing and least developed countries that have mobilized domestic resources for disaster reduction activities and have facilitated the effective implementation of such activities and encourages all developing countries concerned to continue in this direction;

"3. Recommends that all countries, with appropriate support, continue to study conventional and non-conventional ways and means of financing disaster reduction measures, both at the national level and with respect to subregional, regional and international technical cooperation;

"4. Calls upon Member States, relevant intergovernmental bodies and all others involved in the Decade to participate actively in the financial and technical support of Decade activities, in order to ensure the implementation of the International Framework of Action for the Decade, in particular with a view to translating the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World and the Plan of Action contained therein, into concrete disaster reduction programme and activities;

"5. Requests the Commission on Sustainable Development to pay appropriate attention at its fourth session to the issue of disaster reduction when discussing the relevant chapters of Agenda 21 3/ and of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States; 4/

"6. Welcomes the measures proposed by the Secretary-General to bring the International Framework of Action for the Decade into line with the Yokohama Strategy and its Plan of Action, in order to provide disaster reduction activities worldwide and regionally with authoritative and effective programme guidance so as to assure stronger cohesion of disaster reduction programmes and the joint participation of concerned sectors in their implementation;

"7. Notes the initiative for an informal mechanism between the secretariat of the Decade and Member States, in order to facilitate and support the promotion of Decade activities and the regular exchange of information between Governments, organizations of the United Nations system and other organizations;

"8. Welcomes, in pursuance of its resolution 49/22 A, the restructuring of the Special High-Level Council and the Scientific and Technical Committee for the Decade so that for the second half of the Decade they will provide the necessary support to global, regional and national policy and strategy development, public awareness-building and resource mobilization and at the same time provide links with the scientific community and support the national committees for the Decade and national

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3/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), resolution 1, annex II.

4/ Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution I, annex II.

authorities in their cooperative efforts to integrate disaster reduction programmes in national activities for sustainable development;

"9. Endorses the Secretary-General's decision to extend to the end of the Decade the mandate of the Steering Committee of the United Nations for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, established in pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 42/169 of 11 December 1987 and 44/236;

"10. Emphasizes that effective and efficient coordination and servicing of the above components of the International Framework of Action for the Decade requires a financially and structurally stable secretariat of the Decade, reporting to the Secretary-General through the Emergency Relief Coordinator;

"11. Decides, in pursuance of its resolution 49/22 A, to convene a closing event of the Decade, through coordinated sectoral and cross-sectoral meetings at all levels, in order to facilitate the full integration of disaster reduction into the substantive efforts for sustainable development and environmental protection by the year 2000;

"12. Decides that the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction secretariat will serve as the substantive secretariat for the preparation of the closing event of the Decade, working with the full support of relevant bodies of the United Nations Secretariat, and drawing on the contributions of the organizations of the United Nations system concerned, other international organizations and Governments;

"13. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure the availability of resources for the preparatory process, including the necessary enhancement of the capacity of the secretariat, and to appeal for additional voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for the Decade;

"14. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council, a report on the implementation of the International Framework of Action for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction;

"15. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session a report containing proposals on how the distinct

programme and coordination capability of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction secretariat might be enhanced in order to enable it to coordinate effectively the activities of the Decade and the integration of natural disaster reduction into the sustainable development process;

"16. Decides to consider, at its fifty-first session, the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction under environmental questions related to the environment and sustainable development as a separate sub-item."